

## **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** July 1, 2005

**TO:** Robert S. Sherman, Director  
Legislative Research Commission

**CC:** Virginia G. Fox, Secretary  
Education Cabinet

Beth O'Donnell, Executive Director  
Public Service Commission

**FROM:** Bobbie Beth Scoggins, Executive Director  
Kentucky Commission on the  
Deaf and Hard of Hearing

**RE:** TDD Distribution Program Annual Report  
for the Fiscal Year 2004- 2005

Enclosed is the TDD Distribution Annual Report for the fiscal year 2004-2005. As per KRS 163.527, this report is to be submitted to the Kentucky General Assembly through the Legislative Research Commission.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly at 502-573-2604 or [bobbie.scoggins@kcdhh.ky.gov](mailto:bobbie.scoggins@kcdhh.ky.gov).

**The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing**

**Since its inception in 1995, the TDD Distribution Program, administered by the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH), has served 11,856 applicants. From time to time the program has received letters of thanks from grateful recipients. These letters have served as an inspiration to the staff of the TDD Distribution Program, knowing that this program has been very successful in providing a much needed service to constituents of Kentucky.**

*“I have been deaf since birth, am now 77 years old, and want to thank your agency and the state of Kentucky for the wonderful gift of a telephone that I can actually communicate with!”*  
(Deaf Consumer – Louisville)

*“I would like to express my appreciation for the work of KCDHH, the Education Cabinet and other supporters for bringing the CapTel phone to Kentucky. I have had a hearing loss since 1980, and this is the first time I have been able to communicate effectively by phone since that time. I can actually make calls to persons that I am unfamiliar speaking with and I don’t miss important information and details. I know that staff have worked very hard to make this program a reality, and I’m very appreciative of their efforts.”*  
(Hard of Hearing Consumer – Lexington)

*“To all the people who run this program and make it work, I want to thank you so very much, words cannot express my gratitude. I received my CapTel phone and it is working fine.”*  
(Severely Hard of Hearing Consumer – Louisville)

*“I just wanted to thank you again for your kindness and assistance in processing my application for equipment. I feel so fortunate to be a participant and recipient in this very worthy KCDHH program.”*  
(Hard of Hearing Consumer – Louisville)

*“I am speech impaired and was unable to use the phone at all until I heard about your program and received my new speech amplified telephone. Now I can be independent again, thank you!”*  
(Speech Impaired Consumer – Pikeville)

*“I got my equipment today and wanted you to know that without your program I would be stuck at home with no way to communicate with the outside world. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.”*  
(Deaf Consumer – Paducah)

**TDD Distribution Program  
Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2004 - 2005**

**Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Bobbie Beth Scoggins, Ed.D, Executive Director**

In compliance with KRS 163.527, this annual report is submitted to the Kentucky General Assembly through the Legislative Research Commission.

“The Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall provide to the General Assembly an annual report on the operation of the TDD distribution program. The report shall be due on July 1 of each year, beginning July 1, 1995, and, at a minimum, provide:

- (1) The number of persons served and the number of TDDs distributed;
- (2) The revenues and expenditures of the program;
- (3) Discussion of any major policy or operational issues;
- (4) Any changes the Commission plans to make in the program that does not require legislative action; and
- (5) Any proposals for legislative changes in the program.” KRS 163.527

***The number of persons served and the number of TDDs distributed:***

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The TDD Distribution Program has received **1,123** applications during the 2004-2005 fiscal year, for an 95% completion rate. The status of these applications for Specialized Telecommunication Equipment (STE) is as follows as of 6/29/05:

| <b>Status</b>     | <b>Total</b> |
|-------------------|--------------|
| <b>Approved</b>   | 28           |
| <b>Complete</b>   | 1,061        |
| <b>Incomplete</b> | 109          |
| <b>Denied</b>     | 37           |
| <b>Not Active</b> | 109          |
| <b>Total**</b>    | <b>1,344</b> |

\*\* Total status count does not match the number of applications received during the FY due to receipt in one fiscal year and processing in the next fiscal year.

**Approved** - Applications approved for which STE has been ordered but is pending delivery during the FY, or applications were approved but STE has yet to be ordered.

**Completed** - Applications were approved and STE was delivered to consumers and paid for during the FY.

**Incomplete** - Applications are pending receipt of verification. Applications lacking information required to determine eligibility (approval/denial) are returned to the applicant with a request for additional information. Applications are kept pending for one year to allow adequate time to provide necessary verification.

**Denied** – Applications denied because the applicants did not meet the eligibility criteria in order to receive the STE. Notification is sent to each applicant outlining the reason for ineligibility and an explanation of when the applicant might be eligible (i.e. reapplications for a second piece of equipment may be submitted after four (4) years from receipt of the first piece of equipment.)

**Not Active** – These applications have been pending verification for more than twelve (12) months. The applicant is notified and given an additional 30 days to submit the missing verification and if no response is received the application is changed to Not Active and archived.

**1,061 applicants received their STE during the 2004-2005 fiscal year.** A breakdown of these applicants by degree of hearing loss is listed below:

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| Degree of Hearing Loss   | Total        |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Deaf                     | 72           |
| Deaf w/ Limited Vision   | 6            |
| Deaf-Blind               | 1            |
| Hard-of-Hearing          | 607          |
| Late-Deafened            | 10           |
| Severely Hard-of-Hearing | 357          |
| Speech-Impaired          | 8            |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>1,061</b> |

During FY 04-05 the number of applications has risen due to an increase in reapplying for equipment after four (4) years, an increase in public relations advertisement through local television stations and new equipment added to the program in the Fall of 2004 (CapTel). The increase in the number of applications for equipment demanded additional staff time to process during FY 04-05. During February 2005, in response to the TV advertisement that ran in Louisville on Fox 41, more than 300 requests for applications were accepted and processed, requiring additional support from other staff members within the agency.

The number of hard of hearing individuals in the Commonwealth, which includes those self identifies as hard of hearing, severely hard of hearing and late deafened, continues to increase as the population ages. The highest demand for equipment comes from this population, who are in need of amplified phones, voice carry over telephones and the new CapTel device. Requests for standard TDDs, typically used by deaf constituents, continues to decrease. New innovations in technology (i.e. videoconferencing and web cams) and the increase in usage of internet relay service providers to replace traditional telephone lines, has contributed to this reduction as the deaf population replaces standard telephone equipment with computerized technology.

BellSouth partnered with KCDHH again in FY 04-05 to extend our outreach capabilities by including inserts in their billing invoices twice a year. Outreach provided to the majority of audiologists and hearing instrument specialists throughout the state also increased incoming applications as professional become more aware of the program's availability. This streamlines the application process for the consumer, allowing him/her to acquire an application and obtain professional verification of his/her hearing loss while visiting the audiologist, speech pathologist or hearing instrument specialist, rather than making another visit. TDD Program staff is currently working to develop videotapes that instructs professionals on how to complete the application process and

advises them about KCDHH, our programs and resources available to deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired consumers. Once completed the videotape will be mailed to professionals throughout the state to save money on travel expenses.

Hamilton Telecommunications, Inc., Kentucky's Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) provider currently, continues to provide training to consumers, on a one-to-one basis, for those who utilize the relay service. This service has been a great help to the TDD program as our limited staff does not have the time, or travel budget, to do training throughout the state. Hamilton provides data regarding the trainings conducted in each quarterly report presented at the TRS quarterly advisory board meetings. Consumers not utilizing relay for the device they received (such as amplified phones) are trained by KCDHH staff, commissioners or local constituents on a case-by-case basis.

The Public Service Commission contract with Hamilton expires June 30, 2005 and has an outstanding Request for Proposal (RFP) at the time of this report. If another provider wins the bid for 2006 and ongoing, then other arrangements may have to be made to provide training for consumers. Customer satisfaction with Hamilton Relay is well documented, but other telecommunication providers such as MCI and Sprint are known to be bidding on Kentucky's contract. A final determination will be made by July 30, 2005 with the new contract effective August 1, 2005.

State budget constraints minimized travel during this fiscal reporting year. The TDD Program Coordinator attended one out of state conference during FY 04-05, which was the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) National conference. At this conference Kentucky's TDD program was recognized as an outstanding model for program efficiency, satisfaction and as a leader in incorporating advanced technology into our program.

Equipment vendor contracts expired during FY 04-05 and were offered for bid in March of 2005. Bids were received, reviewed and new contracts were finalized in May 2005, with 23 pieces of equipment available to consumers effective June 1, 2005. Previously, consumers were only offered 11 choices of equipment and alerting devices. This expansion allows for more choice by the consumer, depending on the degree of hearing loss, speech impairment or communication preference.

The TDD Program Coordinator serves on several Advisory Boards for organizations who serve the deaf and hard of hearing population. Meetings are held quarterly for the Bell South Advisory Board, the Kentucky Assistive Technology Service and the Telephone Relay Service providers. Written reports from these meetings are compiled and included in the KCDHH Agency Report, which goes to all KCDHH Commissioners, Cabinet heads and is part of the agency's archives.

Outreach regarding the TDD Distribution program was provided at the State Fair booth during the 04-05 FY. Staff also trained individual consumers, audiologists, speech pathologist and hearing instrument specialists on a case-by-case basis throughout the year. Mass mail outs were completed to all professionals who are currently listed within our database to advise them of our program and the equipment available, and to ask that they refer consumers to us directly for applications.

During May 2005, which was “Better Hearing and Speech” Month, we issued three Press Releases that were distributed to local newspapers throughout KY and also distributed within state government by the Education Cabinet and posted on the KY government website. The Executive Director was interviewed by a local radio station during May 2005 and discussed the need for individuals to protect their hearing and be tested early. KCDHH also developed a billboard based on a poster used within the TDD program, to advertise the availability of STEs, and posted the billboard outside the office on Versailles Road in Frankfort. Staff members with the TDD program have taken the following trainings during FY 04-05:

- 7/22/04 – Carpel Tunnel Syndrome – Prevention and Monitoring Techniques
- 5/26/05 – Assistive Technology workshop- Cardinal Hill – Promoting Success of People with Disabilities – Demonstrations of emerging adaptive equipment.
- 6/4/05 – Red Cross – Workshop on rescue techniques, prevention and care of personal health.
- 6/14/05 – Online course – “About Deafness – Accessibility Training” – Includes training on captioning, interpreting, CART, Relay services, Traveling with a Cochlear Implant, Hearing Dogs, Assistive Listening Devices and Text Communication methods.

During the 03-04 FY a Legislative action that released the funding cap for the TDD program allowed us to collect funds to be used to provide the CapTel device to constituents once it became available to Kentucky. However, at the end of FY 03-04, \$60K was transferred to the State General Funds from the TDD Program restricted funds, as a result of the Governor’s order to balance the state budget. This loss of revenue caused the waiting list to be reinstated. During FY 04-05, after requesting the return of these funds and providing justification to the Governor’s Office, \$35K was returned to the TDD program, which allowed for the purchase of equipment for all consumers on the waiting list. At this time, special permission was requested and granted that allowed Kentucky to order 100 CapTel devices during this period.

Any future transfer of rollover funds to the General Fund would jeopardize the effectiveness, efficiency and operation of the TDD program as these restricted funds are legally designated to serve the deaf, hard of hearing and speech-impaired population within the Commonwealth.

***The revenues and expenditures of the TDD Distribution Program  
during the fiscal year 2004-2005***

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| <b>REVENUE</b>          | <b>Year to Date</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| FY 2005 Allotment       | 252,000             |
| FY 03-04 Rollover funds | 37,000              |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>    | <b>287,000</b>      |

**EXPENSES**

**PERSONNEL EXPENSES**

|                                 |        |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| State Employee Salary*          | 0      |
| State Employee Benefits/Fringe* | 0      |
| Other                           | 30,266 |
| Total Personnel Services        | 30,266 |

**OPERATING EXPENSES**

|                              |         |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Utilities                    | 2,125   |
| Rentals                      | 15,833  |
| Maintenance and Repairs      | 0       |
| Postage and Related Services | 3,170   |
| Miscellaneous Services       | 4,631   |
| Telecommunications           | 2,050   |
| Computer Services            | 10,108  |
| Supplies                     | 1,639   |
| Telecommunication Equipment  | 212,964 |
| Travel Expense/ Allowances   | 2,465   |
| Miscellaneous Commodities    | 1,662   |
| Total Operating Expenses     | 255,903 |

|                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b> | <b>286,914</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------|

**13-33-340-TBOO BALANCE** \$85.54    As of 6/30/05

\* KCDHH General Fund paid for state employee's salary and benefits in order that the maximum amount of equipment was purchased and the waiting list was relieved.

***The breakdown of expenditures for each kind of equipment distributed:***

A cost analysis of the STEs distributed and the number of visual alert signalers and amplified ringers distributed, during the fiscal year of 2004-2005 is listed below. Names of devices are repeated on the grid as the vendor changed during FY 04-05 and therefore the price per unit changed on some pieces of equipment previously issued, and new equipment was added to the program. **Current contracted equipment is in bold.**

| STE                                    | Units       | Unit Price      | Total               |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Uniphone 1140                          | 8           | \$215.00        | \$1,720.00          |
| <b>Ultratec 1140 Uniphone</b>          | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$183.00</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| Superprint 4425 w/ASCII                | 20          | \$345.00        | \$6,900.00          |
| <b>4425 w/ASCII</b>                    | <b>1</b>    | <b>\$338.00</b> | <b>\$338.00</b>     |
| TDD-Pro 80 Gold                        | 39          | \$575.00        | \$22,425.00         |
| <b>Pro 80 Gold</b>                     | <b>3</b>    | <b>\$423.00</b> | <b>\$1,269.00</b>   |
| Pro 80 Gold with LVD                   | 2           | \$550.65        | \$1,101.30          |
| <b>TDD Pro 80 with LVD</b>             | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$423.00</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| Amplified-Crystal Tone Plus            | 341         | \$120.00        | \$40,920.00         |
| <b>Crystal Tone Plus</b>               | <b>18</b>   | <b>\$98.00</b>  | <b>\$1,764.00</b>   |
| Amplified-CL-40                        | 392         | \$102.00        | \$39,984.00         |
| <b>Ameriphone CL-40</b>                | <b>36</b>   | <b>\$87.20</b>  | <b>\$3,139.20</b>   |
| <b>Dialogue JV 35 Amplified</b>        | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$81.84</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| Dialogue JV-35 Amp Speakerphone        | 0           | \$109.00        | \$0.00              |
| <b>Ultratec CapTel</b>                 | <b>168</b>  | <b>\$423.50</b> | <b>\$70,644.00</b>  |
| <b>Starplus 45</b>                     | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$79.98</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>ClearSounds 40XLC</b>               | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$78.85</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>Dialogue XL-50</b>                  | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$93.04</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>Dialogue XL-30</b>                  | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$72.80</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>Vtech 2451 Cordless</b>             | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$114.06</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| Ameriphone VCO                         | 25          | \$140.00        | \$3,500.00          |
| <b>Ameriphone VCO</b>                  | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$125.00</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>RC 200 Speakerphone</b>             | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$375.00</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>HC-SPAMP Speech Amplified</b>       | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$60.80</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| HC-SPAMP Speech Amplified              | 0           | \$98.00         | \$0.00              |
| Compact/C-TDD                          | 2           | \$270.00        | \$540.00            |
| <b>Compact/C-TDD</b>                   | <b>1</b>    | <b>\$208.00</b> | <b>\$208.00</b>     |
| Pocket Speak and Read VCO              | 5           | \$209.00        | \$1,045.00          |
| <b>PocketComm VCO/TDD</b>              | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$149.50</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>TeliTalk Speech Aid phone</b>       | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$925.00</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>Total STE (telephone equipment)</b> | <b>1061</b> |                 | <b>\$195,497.50</b> |
|                                        |             |                 |                     |

|                                          |             |                |                     |
|------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Signalers</b>                         |             |                |                     |
| Ultratec Clarity Tone Ringer             | 245         | \$22.00        | \$5,390.00          |
| <b>Clarity Tone Ringer</b>               | <b>16</b>   | <b>\$19.59</b> | <b>\$313.44</b>     |
| Sonic TR-50                              | 7           | \$0.00         | \$0.00              |
| <b>Sonic Alert SR 75 VAS</b>             | <b>289</b>  | <b>\$25.95</b> | <b>\$7,499.55</b>   |
| <b>ClearSounds HT-CL1 Combo Signaler</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$33.00</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>Vibracell Ring – Tactile Signaler</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>\$90.00</b> | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>Total Pieces Equipment</b>            | <b>1618</b> |                | <b>\$208,700.49</b> |

One visual alert signaler (VAS), Amplified Ringer, Tactile Signaler or Combo Signaler, in addition to the STE, is distributed per consumer upon completion of the application. Not all applicants request or receive a signaler, ringer or combo unit with their equipment choice and some applicants request only the VAS / Tactile Signaler/ Amplified Ringer / Combo Signaler. **Therefore, the number of applicants does not match the number of STEs distributed in any given year.**

Since a number of new devices were added to the program this FY, the TDD Distribution Program obtained a demo model of each piece of equipment offered through the program. The total amount of expenditures for consumer equipment does not equal the total amount spent on Telecommunications Equipment that was reported in the finance section of this report, due to this purchase. The demonstration equipment is stored in a locked cabinet at the KCDHH office building and is available for any interested party to test. Appointments are recommended to ensure TDD program staff is available to answer questions and assist with the demonstration. This provides consumers with the opportunity to test equipment prior to selecting.

***Discussion of any major policy or operational issues:***

The TDD Advisory Board meets in person at least once annually, and met twice during the FY 04-05. Information and updates are provided via electronic mail or regular postal mail between face-to-face meetings. Written reports from each meeting are distributed to members, provided to the full Commission for approval and then archived. Listed below are the current nine voting members, two Ex-Officio members and three TDD Program staff. One of the hard of hearing consumer's term expires June 30, 2005 and staff is currently in the process of nominating and approving another hard of hearing member to serve on the TDD Advisory Board.

| <b>Last Name</b> | <b>First Name</b> | <b>Membership Status</b>                   |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Ziehr            | Jeremiah          | Deaf Consumer                              |
| Fowler           | Lewis             | Deaf Consumer                              |
| McRae            | Jayne             | Hard of Hearing Consumer                   |
| Martin           | Kevin             | KCDHH Representative, Advisory Board Chair |
| Lawson           | Johnny            | Speech-impaired Consumer                   |
| Volk             | Thomas            | Speech-impaired Consumer                   |
| Rogers           | Judy              | Severely Hard of Hearing Consumer          |
| Skaggs           | Forest            | KY Telephone Association Representative    |
| Stevens          | Jim               | Public Service Commission Representative   |
|                  |                   |                                            |
| Freeman          | Trish             | KCDHH Commission Chair                     |
| Scoggins         | Bobbie Beth       | KCDHH Executive Director                   |
|                  |                   |                                            |
| Holloway         | Rowena            | Program Coordinator                        |
| White            | Sharon            | TDD Specialist                             |
| Bridges          | Margie            | Database Assistant                         |

Telephone service providers (i.e. BellSouth, Alltel, Verizon) confirm that wireless devices, including cellular telephones, are replacing residential landlines in many urban areas of the Commonwealth. This reduction in the number of lines reduces the funding base for KCDHH's TDD distribution program and the Relay Service Provider (currently a ten cent surcharge is added to all residential telephone lines to fund Both the TDD Program and TRS.) To compensate for this reduction in landlines, and to allow the program to include cellular phones as part of the distribution equipment, KCDHH is working with the Public Service Commission and the Kentucky Telephone Association to pursue the addition of a surcharge on wireless communication devices throughout the Commonwealth.

***Legislative changes that will be pursued for the TDD Distribution program during the 2006 legislative session include:***

- A request to change the title (name) of the TDD Distribution Program to Kentucky Telecommunications Assistance Program (KTAP) will be proposed;
- Changes in the existing funding mechanism from a one-cent portion of the ten-cent surcharge to a two-cent portion of the surcharge on residential landlines. This increase would come from an existing tax base through the telephone companies who collect the surcharge and would not increase taxes to citizens of the Commonwealth.
- Proposal to add wireless communication devices to the existing funding mechanism, which is a ten-cent surcharge on all residential lines currently.
- Propose updates to the existing Administrative Regulations to include verbiage on providing assistive technology for wireless communication needs; and
- Propose changes to the Application itself “TDD Distribution Program Application and Certification”, which is incorporated by reference, to simplify instructions and incorporate the program title change.

***TDD Distribution Program plans for FY 2005 - 2006 not involving Legislative changes include:***

The Program Coordinator and Executive Director will attend the National Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) conference in the Fall of 2005, to promote networking with other state coordinators and view the new developments in assistive technology presented by vendors at the conference. The Executive Director will attend the National Association for State Relay Administration (NASRA) conference in the Fall of 2005 to network with Relay Service providers and obtain information on Video Relay Service (VRS), Video Relay Interpreting (VRI) and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology and review the proposed Federal Regulations governing videoconferencing protocol.

Outreach plans for FY 05-06 include working in partnership with our Relay Service provider, BellSouth, Kentucky Telephone Association, Kentucky Association of the Deaf, Alexander Graham Bell Association, Veterans Administration, Self Help for the Hard of Hearing, American Association of Retired Persons, Kentucky School for the Deaf, Kentucky Department of Education, Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs, Speech and Language Pathologists, Audiologists, Hearing Instrument Specialists, Area Developmental Districts professionals and other public and private agencies who serve the deaf, speech impaired and hard of hearing population, to provide workshops and educational materials on the availability of the TDD Distribution Program and KCDHH resources.